

SOUTHWESTERN WILLOW FLYCATCHER *(Empidonax traillii extimus)*

STATUS: Endangered (60 FR 10694, February 27, 1995) with proposed critical habitat (50 CFR 60706, October 12, 2004). A Recovery Plan was completed in August 2002.

SPECIES DESCRIPTION: Small, migratory bird about 15 cm (6 in) long, with grayish-green back and wings, a white throat, a light gray-olive breast, and a pale yellowish belly. Two wingbars are visible and the eye ring is faint or absent.

HABITAT: Occurs in dense riparian habitats along streams, rivers, and other wetlands where cottonwood, willow, boxelder, tamarisk, Russian olive, buttonbush, and arrowweed are present. Nests are found in thickets of trees and shrubs primarily 4-7 m (13-23 ft) in height, among dense and homogenous foliage. Habitat occurs at elevations below 8,500 ft (2,590 m).

RANGE: Historical: Includes southern California, southern Nevada, southern Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, western Texas, southwestern Colorado, and extreme northwestern Mexico.

Current: Extirpated from much of its historic range, with just over 1100 breeding pairs currently documented in the Southwest. Remnant populations survive in historic locations. Since 1993, southwestern willow flycatcher territories in Arizona have been found along the Gila River, Little Colorado River, Salt River, Cienega Creek, San Pedro River, Pinal Creek, Colorado River, San Francisco River, Hassayampa River, Verde River, Big Sandy River, Santa Maria River, Tonto Creek, and the Bill Williams River. Migrant flycatchers have been detected on additional streams where breeding has not been detected. The southwestern willow flycatcher winters in Mexico, Central America, and possibly northern South America.

REASONS FOR DECLINE/VULNERABILITY: Endangered primarily due to riparian habitat reduction, degradation, and elimination as a result of agricultural and urban development, and water and land management. Other reasons for the decline/vulnerability of the flycatcher include: the fragmented distribution and low numbers of the current population; predation; brood parasitism by cowbirds; and other events such as fires and floods that are naturally occurring, but have become more frequent and intense as a result of the proliferation of exotic vegetation and degraded watersheds, respectively.

NOTES: The Recovery Plan is available at: <http://arizonaes.fws.gov/SWWFFINALRecPlan.htm>

Listed as a Species of Special Concern by the State of Arizona.

The October 12, 2004, critical habitat proposal can be viewed at http://arizonaes.fws.gov/SWWF_PCH_Oct.htm. In Arizona there are critical habitat segments proposed in Apache, Cochise, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Maricopa, Mohave, Pima, Pinal, Yavapai, and Yuma counties. There is no critical habitat proposed in Coconino, Navajo, or Santa Cruz counties.